

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
POPULATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 18, 1999
MAG Office, Suite 200, Saguaro Room
302 North 1st Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

George Pettit, Gilbert, Chairman
Desmond McGeough, Avondale
Jeanine Guy for Joe Blanton, Buckeye
*Sandra Finkbeiner, Cave Creek
Bob Pazera, Chandler
*Leonard Rivera, El Mirage
Geir Sverdrup, Fountain Hills
*Tina Notah, Gila River Indian Community
*Ralph Vasquez, Gila Bend
Ricardo Toris, Glendale

Karen Shurko, Goodyear
*Horatio Skeete, Litchfield Park
Dan Hansing, Mesa
Neil Urban, Maricopa County
Jenifer Corey, Peoria
Fred Osgood, Phoenix
Harry Higgins, Scottsdale
Sharon Sargent-Flack, Surprise
Atis Krigers, Tempe
Jerry Stricklin, Wickenburg
*Robert Tatro, Youngtown

*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Susan Abbott, Bureau of the Census
Jim Howard, Bureau of the Census
Adolfo Echeveste, Bureau of the Census
Jim Castagneri, Bureau of the Census
Kyle McMaster, Chandler
Linda Strock, DES
Hamid Arshadi, Gilbert
David de la Torre, Gilbert
Harry Wolfe, MAG

Heidi Pahl, MAG
Shiloh Thatcher, Maricopa County
Remy Autz, Phoenix
John Kross, Queen Creek
Tony Sissons, Research Advisory Services Inc.
Foster Burton, Retired
Scott Miller, RPTA
Joanie Mead, Scottsdale
Neil Calfee, Tempe

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman George Pettit at 10:12 a.m.

2. Call to the Audience

No requests were received from members of the audience to address the MAG POPTAC.

3. Approval of Minutes of January 21, 1999

It was moved by Geir Sverdrup, seconded by Harry Higgins and unanimously recommended to approve the meeting minutes of January 21, 1999.

4. Local Efforts on Coordination of Census 2000

Harry Wolfe noted that the MAG POPTAC was designated by the MAG Regional Council to coordinate Census 2000 activities. He asked members of the MAG POPTAC to give a status report on Census activities in their jurisdictions. These activities included the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Program, Statistical Areas Program (SAP), Address List Review (ALR'99) Program and other Census activities.

Dan Hansing expressed interest in the Census Bureau providing publicity materials to help jurisdictions inform their residents about the Census. Bob Pazera indicated that Chandler was in the process of putting together a complete count committee. Jerry Stricklin stated that Wickenburg has been compiling addresses and preparing for ALR'99.

5. Status Report on Census 2000

Jim Howard from the Census Bureau stated the staff are near completion of the block canvassing program. In his assignment area he calculated that there were 250,000 address changes, of which 10-20% were deletions. Mr. Howard said they are now editing addresses.

He explained that the block canvass program involves verifying the presence of addresses on the Census Bureau's Master Address File. This was done by talking to someone in every 3rd house and asking them to verify their address and their neighbor's address. He said that if an address was not in the address file then it was added to the file and recorded on a Census map.

Jenifer Corey remarked that cities are more than willing to help the Census Bureau with their block canvassing operation.

Jim Howard said that if there is a foundation for a housing unit and the Census Bureau staff can find an address then they list it in the block canvass program.

Fred Osgood asked if jurisdictions would be receiving feedback on the block canvass program. Mr. Howard said he believes that cities will get a list of addresses to verify. Mr. Howard stated that in the beginning of May, 1999 cities may be receiving addresses to verify from Census Bureau. At that time the cities will have 21 days to respond with documentation to reconcile any discrepancies.

Harry Wolfe reiterated that the next step is to compare Master Address File (MAF) with the cities LUCA file.

George Pettit asked what would happen to building permits between October 1999 and April 2000.

Jenifer Corey mentioned that the City of Peoria is talking about doing their own mailout for new units, but she stated that this can be done for the short census form only.

Jim Howard said that cities can have responsibility and take initiative for getting the most complete count available. He stated that the Census Bureau is going to verify new addresses against postal service addresses. The plan is to pay postal service workers a fee for every address they add to the MAF, and the Census Bureau will account for all questionnaires that are not returned.

George Pettit asked who has the responsibility to do post census follow-up on questionnaires that cities

mailed out to new developments. Harry Wolfe and Jim Howard agreed that the responsibility lies with the Census Bureau ultimately.

Jim Howard stated that in mailout/mailback areas there will be follow-up with questionnaires. He said in the update/leave areas the Census Bureau will find the majority of housing units between October 1999 and April 2000.

Jim Castagneri said that post census local review is currently not part of the Census 2000 plan but that this could change based on what happens in Congress. He said that Congressman Dan Miller is spearheading the effort to reestablish post census local review.

Harry Wolfe stated that post census local review is like a safety net. He stated that a post enumeration survey is just as important as a post census local review and both should be carried out, since they have been done before.

Geir Sverdrup stated that the short 42 day process of ALR'99 for reviewing address files in the update/leave area is a major concern.

Harry Higgins asked if the block canvassers had problems accessing gated communities. Mr. Howard said there were no problems that they could not overcome. He stated that if gated communities do not want the Census Bureau to enter then it becomes the responsibility of the gated community to ensure that its residents fill out their census questionnaires.

Fred Osgood expressed concern with the Census Bureau's fluctuating deadlines. He said it creates problems with the city budget in terms of hiring staff for a certain period of time to do a census project whose deadline has been moved. Mr. Osgood noted that there is inadequate partnering between cities and the Census Bureau.

Susan Abbott discussed the establishment of complete count committees, including the development of publicity programs.

Harry Wolfe stated that potential champions within a community can play a role in getting the Census 2000 underway and getting everyone to fill out the census questionnaires. He said that a mayor could appoint champions to complete count committees to play a leading role in encouraging people to be counted.

Susan Abbott stated that every Arizonan will be affected to some degree by the outcome of the Census. Ms. Abbott reported some results from the national advertising campaign on the likelihood of response to the census. She stated that 40% of the population were considered most likely to respond, 43% were identified as undecided/passive and 17% were identified as least likely to respond. She said the last two groups would need more intensive education and support to encourage them to respond. This is where the Census Bureau and the cities would form complete count committees to help convince the last two groups to respond to the census questionnaire.

Ms. Abbott noted that the Census Bureau is providing other resources such as fact sheets, educational materials, the Census in the Schools Program, Be Counted, Questionnaire Assistance Centers materials and training, and questionnaire telephone assistance. Ms. Abbott announced that Phoenix will have a call center for telephone assistance with the Census.

Neil Urban stated that the County wanted to play a role in establishing or working with complete count

committees. Mr. Urban asked representatives from the smaller towns that if the County organizes complete count committees would they be interested in participating. The smaller communities expressed an interest in Mr. Urban's offer.

6. Local Update of Census Addresses Program

Harry Wolfe stated that cities have not yet received their ALR'99 files but that cities may receive addresses in February or March 1999. He noted that ALR'99 is different from LUCA because it requires identifying discrepancies in the number of housing units by block rather than updating addresses.

Harry Wolfe explained that the shortened time frame from 90 days in LUCA to 42 days in ALR'99 is based upon the fact that the program requires resolving housing unit count discrepancies by block rather than updating addresses. He added that, however, MAG believes that ALR 99 would require the same effort as LUCA and therefore warrants the same amount of review time as LUCA. Mr. Wolfe continued that the Census Bureau should be notified where missing addresses are located. He stated that as soon as the block summary data is available MAG can begin work on ALR'99.

Remy Autz asked if the addresses they receive for ALR'99 affect block canvassing. Harry Wolfe replied that the count of units is from the address listing operation in the Fall of 1998 and these lists will be part of ALR' 99 program.

Geir Sverdrup stated that Fountain Hills has an in-city address list that he would like to compare to the Census Bureau's address list for ALR'99.

Harry Wolfe mentioned that MAG is working on supplying the Census Bureau with building permits issued data to predict where new housing units will be constructed between October 1999 and April 2000. He noted that MAG has collected building permit completions for nine years. He stated that MAG has good data and could supply addresses for units anticipated to be constructed by April 1, 2000.

Fred Osgood asked if the City of Phoenix could get maps back electronically. Jim Castagneri responded they could not because the design of the program is paper based and that is how maps will be delivered to cities.

7. Statistical Areas Program

Neil Urban provided a status report on the Census 2000 Participant Statistical Areas Program (SAP). Mr. Urban distributed maps showing recommended changes to census tracts and block groups for Population Technical Advisory Committee (POPTAC) members to review and provide comments. He stated that all jurisdictions have sent in SAP information except for three cities. He mentioned that currently the County is in the process of making final edits to the maps. Mr. Urban noted that cities needing minor adjustments should contact the County.

Harry Wolfe stated that some time ago the MAG POPTAC recommended that an effort be made to not consolidate block groups. He added that, if a block group falls below its minimum population threshold of 600, the Census Bureau will generally consolidate it with the adjoining block group. He mentioned that a reason for not consolidating block groups is to have the Census 2000 data available at the lowest level of geography possible. Mr. Wolfe stated that another reason for not consolidating block groups is to maintain the homogeneity of the block group in accordance with the Census Bureau definition of a block group.

Mr. Wolfe stated that based upon 2000 population projections most block groups will meet the minimum population threshold. Therefore, combining block groups would not be recommended. He added that for those block groups that do not meet the minimum population threshold justification would be provided.

Jim Castagneri emphasized that to keep a block group that does not meet the minimum population threshold justification must be provided. Mr. Castagneri explained that if new block groups do not meet Census Bureau criteria they would not be allowed. He pointed out that the design of SAP is very specific and the Census Bureau cannot deviate from that design.

8. Census Transportation Planning Package

Mr. Wolfe stated that the Census Bureau is requesting that Metropolitan Planning Organizations that intend to participate in the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTTP) supply them with updated Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) boundaries by summer 1999. Harry Wolfe stated the importance of aggregating data to the TAZ level when running the socioeconomic and transportation models. Mr. Wolfe announced that MAG will be looking at TAZ's and defining where there is a need for new TAZ's. Harry Wolfe announced that MAG staff will be meeting with transportation staff of member agencies to recommend new TAZ boundaries.

Mr. Wolfe noted that changes to TAZ boundaries should be consistent with block group and census tract boundaries to the extent possible. He noted, however, that TAZ boundaries have certain requirements that must also be met that are different from Census Bureau criteria. He stated that TAZ boundaries follow major streets or planned streets.

Mr. Wolfe reported that MAG will be creating a block/TAZ lookup table, where every Census 2000 block will be assigned to a TAZ or TAZ's. He said that the closer the TAZ's fit within blocks the better the data will be.

Mr. Wolfe reported that POPTAC will be requested to approve changes to Traffic Analysis Zones.

Jim Castagneri stated that the CTTP is supported by the Census Bureau but run by Federal Highways Administration (FHWA). He stated that for this program they obtain software from ESRI, and obtain data from the Census Bureau.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.